A declaration of the Queenes Maieſties moſt gratious

dealing with William Marſden, and Robert Anderton, Seminarie Prieſts, ſithens the time of their iuſt condemnation, being conuicted according to the Lawes, and of their obſtinacie in refuſing to acknowledge their duetie and alleageance to her Maieſtie. 1586.

WHereas at the laſt Seſſion of Parliament among other good and neceſſary Lawes and ordinances eſtabliſhed for the maintenance, continuance and preſeruation of her Maieſties moſt happy and quiet gouernment, and for the preuenting and auoiding of Treaſons and practiſes traiterouſly attempted by certaine of her Maieſties euill-affected Subiects, being Ieſuites and Seminarie Prieſts, made and created at Rome and Rhemes, and other places beyond the Seas, who at the inſtigation of the Pope and others, fauouring his pretended tyrannous authoritie ouer the Crowne of England, and enuying the happie and bleſſed eſtate of her Maieſties ſaide gouernment, came dayly into the Realme, to peruert and ſeduce her Maieſties good Subiects vnder colour of Religion, to draw them from their due and naturall obedience towards her Maieſtie & her Crowne, & to prepare their minds and bodies to aſſiſt ſuch forraine inuaſion, as was certainely diſcouered to be intended by the ſaid Pope & his adherents, as by ſundrie effects and proofes hath manifeſtly appeared, namely by the late Rebellion in the North, the inuaſion attempted in Ireland, and by the diſcouerie of ſundrie late plottes and purpoſes of Treaſon, aſwell againſt her Maieſties ſacred perſon, as againſt the common quiet of the Realme: There was for theſe conſiderations an Act made againſt the ſaid Ieſuites and Seminarie Prieſts, by the which their acceſſe into the Realme for the like ſeditious and traiterous purpoſes was prohibited, and ordered to be puniſhed as in caſes of Treaſon: Contrary to which Act of Parliament, one William Marſden, and Robert Anderton, Seminarie Prieſts, being reconciled at Doway in Artois, by a Ieſuite called father Columbine, and made Prieſts by the Cardinall of Guyſe at Rhemes, arriuing ſecretly out of France, lately at the Iſle of Wight, where they were apprehended, haue confeſſed their purpoſe of comming into the Realme, to haue bene to win ſoules, (as they terme it) being in effect, (as is before mentioned) to perſwade her Maieſties Subiects vnder colour of maintenance of Popery, to rebellion. For the which, they hauing bene by the due and orderly courſe of her Maieſties Lawes, tryed and conuicted at the laſt Aſſyſes holden at Wincheſter in the Countie of Southhampton, vpon the ſtatute aforeſaid, were neuertheleſſe by the Iudges of that Circuite (knowing the mercifull minde and gracious diſpoſition of the Queenes Maieſtie towards all her Subiects) conferred withall concerning their meaning towards her Maieſties perſon and the Realme, at which time they pretended in wordes, and exteriorly ſhew to acknowledge her Maieſtie to be rightfull Queene of this Realme, and to owe and proteſt, that they would at all times aduenture their liues in defence of her Maieſtie and her Realmes, againſt the Pope, or any forraine power whatſoeuer, that ſhould attempt to inuade the Realme with force, and that they would not meddle or perſwade with any in matter of Religion, but onely keepe their owne conſciences to themſelues: Whereupon they were ſtayed from their execution, her Maieſtie minding nothing leſſe, then that any of her Subiects, though diſagreeing from her in Religion, ſhould die for the ſame, as by them and their companions hath bene moſt falſely and ſlanderouſly publiſhed and affirmed. Upon report whereof made by the ſaid Iudges to the Lords and others of her Maieſties moſt honorable Priuie Councill, they following the milde and temperate courſe of her Maieſties gouernment, cauſed the ſaid Marſden and Anderton to be ſtayed from execution, and to be remooued from Wincheſter to London, where they were further conferred withall, and examined concerning their obedience and duetie towardes her Maieſtie for Ciuill cauſes, onely to prooue whether they would remaine conſtant in their proteſtations in that behalfe made to the Iudges at their arraignment and conuiction, that her Maieſtie might thereupon haue bene mooued to extend her mercie towardes them. The ſaid Marſden and Anderton being accordingly examined by two principall perſons thereunto appointed by her Maieſties ſaid Priuie Councill, and put in remembrance of their former ſhew of duetie made before the Iuſtices of Aſſyſe, and aduiſed to confirme the hope conceiued of their reformation in matters of their alleageance to her Maieſtie, to the ende they might thereby mooue her Maieſtie to ſhew mercie vnto them: Whereupon firſt the ſaid Anderton, being required to explaine his true meaning in his proteſtation of her Maieſties right to the Crowne, and of his alleageance, and particularly whether he did acknowledge her Maieſtie to be lawfull Queene, notwithſtanding any ſentence which the Pope either had giuen, or could giue againſt her: and whether he meant that it was his duetie, and the dueties of all her Maieſties Subiects, to withſtand the Pope, not onely if his inuaſion were for temporall reſpects, as to make conqueſt of the Realme, but alſo if he would attempt ſuch an inuaſion by force to reduce the Realme to his obedience by colour of Religion: he anſwered, that they be queſtions wherewith he doth not deale, and required to bee reſpited for his anſwere, vntill ſuch caſes ſhould happen, adding by way of abuſion, that in the meane time hee may poſſibly be a Proteſtant, and ſo then become of other opinion then he is now of.

William Marſden to the ſame queſtions before propounded to Anderton, anſwered, That he acknowledged her Maieſtie to be lawfull Queene of this Realme, and of other her Dominions: and that he tooke himſelfe bound to obey her Maieſtie, ſo far as his obedience impeached not his duetie to God and to the Church, (meaning the Church of Rome) requiring that he might not bee aſked his opinion any further, vntill ſuch caſe of ſentence giuen by the Pope ſhould happen, and further ſaith, that in caſe the Pope would ſend any forces into the Realme, to reduce the ſame to the Catholique Religion, (meaning Popery) he would then doe the duetie of a Prieſt, that is, hee would pray, that right might take place.

And whereas they had both promiſed before the Iuſtices of Aſſiſe, that they would not meddle in perſwading of any perſon in matter of Religion, but onely keepe their owne conſcience to themſelues: they now in this examination, denie that euer they promiſed not to deale with her Maieſties Subiects, to perſwade them in matter of Religion: Anderton ſaying, That he taketh ſuch as be out of the vnitie of the Church of Rome, to ſtand in ſtate of damnation, and that therefore hee is bound in conſcience to do what he can to reclaime them. And Marſden ſayth, He may not promiſe not to deale with any of her Maieſties ſubiects in matters of Religion: for that he comming into the Realme to perſwade the Catholique Religion, (meaning Poperie) hee can not binde himſelfe not to do that duetie.

Hereby may appeare to all her Maieſties louing and truehearted Subiects, the traiterous purpoſe of theſe two Seminarie Prieſts, being borne Subiects of the Realme, who though in generall termes and ſpeeches they ſeemed and made ſhew to the Iuſtices of Aſſiſe, of true and duetifull alleageance to the Queenes Maieſtie their naturall Soueraigne: yet when endeuoure is vſed to vncouer their maſked and fained proteſtations, they can not hide their malice and treaſonable intentions, euen to their owne confuſions: which appearing thus manifeſtly to the Queenes moſt excellent Maieſtie, hauing ſubſcribed theſe former anſweres with their owne hands, whereas ſhee was much inclined vpon the report of the ſaid Iuſtices to afford them grace and pardon, if they wold haue perſiſted in their former proteſtations, finding them now vnworthy thereof, hath left them to the puniſhment appointed by the Law to be inflicted vpon them for their iuſt offence.

¶ God ſaue the Queene.

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